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SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/CAR (ACADIEUX) (VDEPIRRO) (WSMITH)
WHA/EPSC (MROONEY)(FCORNEILLE)
SANTO DOMINGO FOR FCS AND FAS
TREASURY FOR ERIN NEPHEW

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [EINV](#) [ECON](#) [ETRD](#) [EAGR](#) [KIPR](#) [TSPL](#) [TRSY](#) [XL](#) [JM](#)
SUBJECT: JAMAICA: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE
EMPHASIZES AGRICULTURE

REF: A) KINGSTON 949

1 (U) SUMMARY: Karl Samuda, Minister of Industry, Investment and Commerce, told attendees at the 22nd annual Science and Technology Conference that what separates Jamaica from the rich and developed countries is the determination to apply technology to production. He emphasized the importance of developing profitable niche markets and in using intellectual property rights protection to help producers. Dr. Monty Jones, Executive Director of the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa, offered to share his rice technology and partner with Jamaica on a policy level to distribute technology to end users. End Summary.

12. (U) Samuda said that Jamaica's land size is not an issue if Jamaica uses its human capital. He pointed to Mauritius as an example of a small country that introduced technology to prosper in the world economy and encouraged Jamaica to do the same. Both Samuda and Robert Gregory, Executive Director for Jamaica Trade and Invest, said that the future of Jamaica's economy was in developing profitable niche markets such as high quality coffee and ginger and through building on the positive brand that Jamaica has in the world. He suggests that the Jamaica Intellectual Property Office is an important tool for protecting the country's intellectual property rights. Samuda and Gregory recognized that Jamaica cannot compete in many industries, but rather, should focus on those in which it has a comparative advantage.

13. (U) Jones recommended that Jamaica produce rice if it was going to be a staple in the local diet. Jones received the 2004 World Food Nobel Laureate for his work in combining an Asian and African strain of rice to create Nerica (New Rice for Africa). The strain combines the production volume of the Asian strain with the heartiness and durability of the African strain and can grow in 75-90 days, allowing two crops to be planted each year.

14. (U) Jones offered to partner with Jamaica, through FARA, in the areas of technological advocacy, access to knowledge by producers and manufacturers, and in the creation of necessary government policies to improve scientific innovation in order to raise farm production rates. Jones and Samuda both spoke of the need for new technology created by scientists to reach the farmers and productive end-users.

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